

# Work on living shoreline begins near ferry landing



PHOTO BY CHRIS POLK Oxford Commissioners Tim Kearns, left, and Peter Dunbar inspect the work that has begun on a living shoreline in Oxford between the ferry landing and Tred Avon Yacht Club

Posted: Monday, February 14, 2011 12:00 am | Updated: 6:39 am, Mon Feb 14, 2011.

By **KELLEY L. ALLEN** Staff Writer

OXFORD Work officially started Wednesday on a living shoreline in Oxford between the ferry landing and Tred Avon Yacht Club, the second such project in town.

Living shorelines offer an alternative to riprap or bulkheads and are the state's preferred method of shoreline protection. Oxford's latest project at the ferry landing will create 140 linear feet of tidal marsh, backfilled with native grasses, and will include a kayak ramp launch.

Gene Slear, vice president of Environmental Concern, which is doing the project, said work should start full force this week. The project is similar to one at the town park, but smaller, he said.

Town Commissioner Peter Dunbar, who spearheaded both living shoreline projects, said work at the ferry dock should be finished in March.

"We, of course, are looking forward to it for many reasons, not the least of which is that it presents a beautiful, Bay-based entrance to the town for those coming off the ferry and a great place to sit while waiting to leave on the ferry," Dunbar said.

Along with the tidal marsh and kayak ramp, the ferry project will include a 15-foot-wide and 140-foot-long sill with one opening that will extend not more than 35 feet channelward, backfilled with sand planted with native grasses.

Those grasses trap sediment, filter pollution and offer habitat for marine life.

Slear said the project also will include bio-retention areas on either side of the ferry, which are areas of porous soils planted with deep-rooted plants that help with water quality.

The town's shoreline at town park is finished except for bio-retention areas slotted for spring planting. The marsh grasses planted there in October will likely be replanted in early spring, Dunbar said.

Funds for the ferry dock project came from a \$69,426 grant through the Chesapeake Bay Trust, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Maryland Department of the Environment.

"The Trust and our funding partners ... provide resources for living shorelines because of their ecological benefits," said Dr. Jana Davis, associate executive director and chief scientist of the Chesapeake Bay Trust. "The Town of Oxford has been a wonderful partner of the trust, pursuing a community-wide initiative to replace hardened shorelines with this Bay-friendly technique. Not only do these two projects, the Morris Street Park and the ferry dock living shorelines, provide habitat, but they serve as a demonstration to all citizens about alternative Bay-friendly ways to protect property from erosion."

The town secured about \$161,000 in grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the CBT for the living shoreline at the park.

Kody Cario, wetland restoration manager for Environmental Concern, worked on the town park project, and is working on the project at the ferry landing.

Talk of living shorelines in Oxford started several years ago, and town officials secured a grant for the park project design phase in 2008. At that time, town officials had hope for four projects in town, including the park, the ferry landing, at the Strand and at the end of Lovers Lane.

Those last two projects did not receive funding.



The shoreline will create 140 linear feet of tidal marsh, backfilled with native grasses, and will include a kayak launching ramp.

